



Two Teachers, Every Child

How Second Teachers Enable Individualised Learning in Child-Centric Classrooms

Prepared by: Gayathri Tirthapura

Date: July 2026

Tejasvita Trust



Table of Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**
 - 2. Why Individualised Learning Matters**
 - 3. The Core Problem: One Teacher Cannot Do It Alone**
 - 4. Why a Second Teacher Is Needed**
 - 5. Defining the “Second Teacher” Role**
 - 6. Study Overview**
 - 6.1. Purpose and Questions
 - 6.2. Research Context
 - 6.3. Data Sources
 - 6.4. Scope and Limitations
 - 7. Key Findings from Classroom Practice**
 - 7.1. Time Matters: Presence Must Align with Core Learning Blocks
 - 7.2. Role Clarity Matters: The Second Teacher Must Be Connected to Learning
 - 7.3. Training Matters: The Second Teacher Must Function as an Educator
 - 7.4. Planning Time Matters: Collaboration Must Be Built Into the System
 - 8. Child Progress Patterns: Supplementary Evidence**
 - 9. What Strong Two-Teacher Classrooms Look Like: School-1-UKG**
 - 10. Implications**
 - 11. Conclusion**
 - 12. References**
-

1. Executive Summary

India's education policy direction is clear: every child must build strong foundational capacities in the early years. NEP 2020, NCF-FS 2022, and NIPUN Bharat emphasize play-based, activity-based, developmentally appropriate learning with attention to children's individual pace and needs [1,2,6].

The challenge is implementation. In a child-centric classroom of 25-30 young children, one teacher must observe, demonstrate, scaffold, manage behaviour, support emotional needs, prepare materials, assess progress, and respond to unexpected situations. When children differ widely in language, numeracy, attention, confidence, and independence, one adult cannot consistently reach every child.

This white paper examines the role of the second teacher in making individualised learning possible. The term "second teacher" is used as a functional term: the person may be an assistant teacher, support teacher, or co-teacher. What matters is whether the second adult functions as an educator who helps ensure that every child is seen, supported, and moved forward.

The study documented two UKG classrooms in affordable private schools partnering with Tejasvita Trust. Both classrooms had a second teacher, but the role was structured differently. School-1-UKG showed a mature co-teaching-like model with shared ownership, weekly planning, and role rotation. In School-2-UKG showed a partial-day, still-developing model where the second teacher was present fewer hours and was still learning the method.

Key conclusion: A second teacher is not an optional add-on in a high-quality child-centric classroom. It is a structural requirement for individualised learning. But the role must be intentionally designed, trained, scheduled, and supported.

Time matters: The second teacher must be present during the classroom's most intensive learning blocks, not used as a floating resource across the school.	Role clarity matters: The second teacher must have a defined role in children's learning - observing, scaffolding, supporting groups, and maintaining classroom flow - not only helping with logistics or a narrow set of children.
Training matters: The second teacher must understand child-centric pedagogy deeply enough to make real-time decisions about when to help, when to step back, and how to scaffold different children.	Planning time matters: Two-teacher classrooms work best when both teachers have protected time to plan activities, divide roles, review children's needs, and follow up on progress.



Supplementary child progress data from Term 1 to Term 3 added cautious support to the classroom findings. Both classrooms began at broadly similar overall levels, but School-1-UKG showed stronger growth, especially in English spoken language and English literacy. Cognitive/numeracy growth was strong in both classrooms.

This pattern is useful because School-2-UKG's second teacher was used more narrowly, especially for targeted numeracy support, while School-1-UKG's second teacher shared responsibility across classroom processes and domains. The data does not prove causality, but it is consistent with the main finding: broader, better-trained, better-planned second-teacher collaboration may be especially important for language and literacy, where children need repeated conversation, prompting, correction, demonstration, and child-specific scaffolding.

The implications are practical. For schools, the second teacher should not be treated as a floating helper; their time must be aligned with core learning blocks, and their role must be clearly connected to children's learning. For program designers, the second-teacher role needs deliberate frameworks, training pathways, planning templates, and mentoring tools. For funders, the message is that quality child-centric education requires investment not only in curriculum, materials, and teacher training, but also in staffing design—including second-teacher time, training, planning, and mentoring.

2. Why Individualised Learning Matters

Individualised learning means meeting each child at their current developmental level instead of teaching the whole class as if all children are at the same stage. In practice, this may mean helping one child understand quantities using concrete materials while another child is ready for place value, or helping a hesitant child attempt a task independently while extending the challenge for a more confident child.

This approach is central to early childhood education. NCF-FS states that every child is capable of learning, but each child grows and develops at their own pace; it emphasises flexible, multi-level, play-based and activity-based learning supported by observation, questioning, exploration, and scaffolding [1]. NIPUN Bharat similarly stresses inclusive, activity-based environments and tracking children's learning so that all children build foundational literacy and numeracy [2].



This matters sharply in affordable private schools serving low-income communities. Children enter preschool with different levels of exposure to language, books, play materials, and formal learning. Without individualised support, struggling children may lose confidence or fall behind, while children who are ahead may become restless or disengaged. The goal is not merely to “cover” activities; it is to ensure that every child receives the right level of support and challenge.

3. The Core Problem: One Teacher Cannot Do It Alone

Child-centric learning makes children's differences visible. That is its strength, but also its implementation challenge. In a one-teacher classroom, the same adult must lead the group, observe individual progress, scaffold multiple levels, manage behaviour, support emotional regulation, prepare materials, and respond to children who need help at the moment.

In one documented observation, a lead teacher moved rapidly from child to child, spending hardly a few minutes with each before being called elsewhere. The teacher was trying to respond to everyone, but the structure did not allow sustained engagement with any one child. This is not a teacher failure; it is a structural constraint.

For school leaders and funders, the implication is important: improving classroom quality is not only about curriculum or teacher mindset. It is also about designing the right adult support structure inside the classroom.

4. Why a Second Teacher Is Needed

Tejasvita's child-centric preschool model is built around hands-on materials, free play, huddle activities, process art, circle time, read-alouds, guided reading, observation-based assessment, and differentiated scaffolding. These practices align with NCF-FS, but they require high adult attention [1].

During free play, children may be working on puzzles, counting, beginning sounds, movable alphabets, place value, sorting, seriation, or writing readiness at the same time. During small group activities, some children may need Level 1 support while others are ready for Level 2 tasks. During circle time, some children need help listening, regulating behaviour, or participating orally.

A second teacher makes this model workable by allowing one teacher to provide focused support while the other provides the support depending on the needs of the classroom in the moment, as follows:

- Allowing one teacher to give focused support while the other maintains a whole-class view
- Helping children who are stuck before they disengage
- Supporting hesitant, quiet, restless, or confused children
- Helping with behaviour and emotional regulation without stopping instruction
- Enabling small-group and one-on-one scaffolding
- Observing children and feeding those observations into planning
- preparing and managing materials so learning time is not lost
- allowing differentiation across learning levels

However, the presence of a second adult does not automatically produce better learning. Research on teaching assistants cautions that additional adults support learning only when they are well-trained, well-prepared, and deployed to supplement teacher-led learning, not replace it [3,4].

This study therefore asks not only whether a second teacher is needed, but how the role must be designed.

5. Defining the “Second Teacher” Role

This white paper uses “second teacher” as a functional role, not a fixed job title. The second teacher may be an assistant teacher, support teacher, co-teacher, or another trained adult who shares responsibility for children’s learning.

What matters is not the designation. What matters is whether the second teacher helps create a “two-hand system” in the classroom. In one classroom in this study, the second teacher functioned as a targeted assistant, supporting specific children and familiar foundational tasks, especially in numeracy. In another, the second teacher functioned almost as a co-lead, sharing responsibility across classroom processes, learning domains, materials, observation, and scaffolding.

Both models can be useful, but they are not equivalent. A targeted support role may be a practical starting point when the second teacher is new, partially trained, or available only for limited hours. However, if the role remains too narrow, the classroom loses the fuller benefit of a second teacher. A broader co-educator role is more likely to support individualised learning across language, literacy, numeracy, behaviour, independence, and classroom routines.

6. Study Overview

6.1. Purpose and Questions

The study was conducted to understand how a second teacher contributes to differentiation and inclusive support in child-centric preschool classrooms. It asked:

- What kinds of instructional, emotional, behavioural, and logistical support do second teachers provide?
- Do they support a range of children or focus narrowly on a few?
- How do lead teachers and second teachers coordinate their efforts?
- What happens when the second teacher is active, trained, and integrated into classroom routines?
- What gaps appear when time, role clarity, training, or planning are limited?
- What does a strong two-teacher classroom look like in practice?

6.2. Research Context

The study examined two UKG classrooms in affordable private schools in Bangalore partnering with Tejasvita Trust. Both implemented Tejasvita’s child-centric preschool model, but differed in second-teacher deployment.

Study Snapshot	School-1-UKG	School-2-UKG
Children	21	25
Teachers	Sanjana (lead teacher), Rachana	Chetana (lead teacher), Sandhya
Structure	Second teacher had worked with the lead teacher over two years in the Tejasvita model and was able to participate across classroom processes, including free play, huddle activities, circle time, materials, observation, scaffolding, and literacy-related support.	Second teacher was present from 9:45 AM to 12:15 PM and had joined the UKG classroom mid-year after teacher attrition. Because she had not received the full Tejasvita training, her role was necessarily narrower and more concentrated around familiar targeted support tasks, especially for children needing foundational numeracy/math support.
Collaboration Pattern	Mature, coordinated model with shared ownership, weekly planning, role rotation, and broad responsibility for all children.	Promising but constrained model: partial-day presence, more defined support role, still learning the method.

6.3. Data Sources

Structured classroom observations during Free Play, Circle Time, and Huddle Activities, using 5-minute time-sampling to record what each adult was doing.

Teacher interviews with lead and second teachers, focused on role division, support for children, planning, and challenges.

Planning artifacts, including weekly planning sheets and classroom samples.

Supplementary child progress data from Term 1, Term 2, and Term 3 for 46 UKG children across comparable Tejasvita preschool competencies.

6.4. Scope and Limitations

This is a small, practice-focused study. It does not prove causal impact on child outcomes. The child progress data is observation-based and may be affected by a variety of factors including teacher understanding of assessment and classroom context. For this reason, the data is used as triangulating evidence: it shows whether child progress patterns are consistent with the classroom collaboration findings.

7. Key Findings from Classroom Practice



The study found that a second teacher can be a powerful enabler of individualised learning, but only when the role is designed well. Both classrooms had a second teacher; what differed was how the role was scheduled, defined, trained, and planned.

7.1. Time Matters: Presence Must Align with Core Learning Blocks

Individualised learning happens across the day: during free play, circle time, huddle activities, process art, read-alouds, guided reading, transitions, and informal moments when children ask questions or struggle. In School-2-UKG, Sandhya was present only from 9:45 AM to 12:15 PM, leaving Chetana alone during early preparation, the early part of free play, and later classroom responsibilities.

“When I reach at 8.30, half an hour I cannot do anything with children. I have to prepare for the classroom which I cannot do any other time.”

Chetana felt that longer support of the second teacher would directly affect children who needed more scaffolding:

“Full time she will be there means we can reach lower children also. We can give them more concentration.”

Sanjana expressed the same structural need through the “two hands” metaphor:

“When she [Rachana] is present, it is like right and hand left hand. Two hands means we can hold everything nicely. One hand means I can’t hold twenty things in one hand.”

Implication: A second teacher should not be treated as a floating resource. Their schedule must cover the most intensive learning blocks, otherwise opportunities for timely support are lost.

7.2. Role Clarity Matters: The Second Teacher Must Be Connected to Learning

The second teacher’s impact depends on whether their role is active, clear, and connected to children’s learning. In School-2-UKG, Sandhya’s role was narrow initially, mainly with children needing extra help. This was not necessarily a poor decision; given her limited training and mid-year entry, a targeted support role was a practical way to use her strengths without overwhelming her. She could support specific children and familiar tasks, especially in numeracy/math-related work.

Targeted help is useful, but if the second teacher works only with a few children, she may not understand the whole class.

This distinction helps explain the child progress pattern. School-2-UKG made strong cognitive/numeracy gains, which is consistent with the fact that Sandhya’s role was most usable in targeted, familiar support tasks. But a narrow role has limits. It does not give the second teacher enough space to support language, literacy, classroom observation, emotional needs, material flow, and broader individualised scaffolding across the day.

In School-1-UKG, roles were flexible but intentional. Rachana explained:

“We are two teachers in the classroom. We have divided the work. If Sanjana ma’am is doing some other work, I am ready to do another work.”

Role clarity did not mean hierarchy. It meant both teachers knew how to divide attention, rotate groups, maintain a whole-class view, and adjust based on children’s needs. As Sanjana put it:

“One day I may forget to put the water, she has to see. If she has not put water, I have to see.”

Implication: Schools and programs must define how two teachers work together across classroom processes. A narrow targeted role may be a useful starting point for a new or partially trained second teacher, but it should not become the final model. Over time, the second teacher should be enabled to observe, scaffold, support, participate in all domains of children’s development, manage transitions, maintain a whole-class view, and contribute to planning.

7.3. Training Matters: The Second Teacher Must Function as an Educator

Child-centric teaching requires many small decisions: how much help to give, when to demonstrate, when to wait, when to redirect, and when to step back. In School-2-UKG, Sandhya had taken on the role mid-year and had not undergone Tejasvita’s full training.

“Still now also I haven’t learned fully. But I am learning from Chetana.”

Because she was still learning the method, she often needed guidance on how to use materials and scaffold children. This narrowed what she could confidently take on. With limited training, a second teacher may be able to support familiar tasks, but may not yet be ready to lead literacy work, conduct read-alouds, make decisions about language scaffolding, manage open-ended child-centric processes, or take a “bird’s-eye view” of the whole classroom.

Chetana explained the burden this placed on the lead teacher:

“For her everything is new. If I tell again and again and again she is also feeling so sad. Everything new means it is really difficult. Their time is also wasted.”

At the same time, the study shows that second teachers can grow meaningfully with support. Rachana described her journey from not knowing the method to becoming more confident:

“This is the third year in the teaching profession. Without knowing anything, I came here. But compared to last two years, this year I have learnt so many things, ma’am. And I am improving myself.”

Sandhya also showed emerging judgement, recognising that helping too many children at once caused confusion and she needs to work with one or few children at a time.

This is an important distinction. Sandhya’s growth shows that targeted training and experience can help a second teacher become more effective within a specific area. But School-1-UKG shows the next level: when the second teacher is trained more holistically, she can move beyond one support area and share responsibility across the full classroom. This broader capability is especially important for spoken language and literacy, where progress depends on frequent adult interaction, prompting, correction, demonstration, and confidence-building throughout the day.

Implication: Training for second teachers must go beyond routines. It must build pedagogical judgement and domain breadth. A second teacher should gradually move from supporting familiar tasks to taking responsibility for small-group instruction, child observation, literacy and language scaffolding, behaviour support, transitions, and classroom flow. Without this breadth, the role remains useful but limited.

7.4. Planning Time Matters: Collaboration Must Be Built Into the System

Without shared planning time, coordination becomes hurried and reactive. In School-2-UKG, Chetana and Sandhya did not have regular time to plan together.

“I am not getting the time to discuss also ma’am. During class five minutes I will explain. Today we have like this, like this, like this.”

Sandhya too described catching up during class time:

“I will not see the daily plan. That time I will ask them. Today’s work what is there. During class time only I will ask what is next tomorrow.”

School-1-UKG had a different rhythm. Planning was part of the system:

“Every Saturday, we sit for the planning.”

This allowed both teachers to enter the classroom with a common understanding of activities, materials, children’s needs, and role division. It also supported responsiveness: Sanjana described postponing an activity when she realised children were not ready, choosing to adapt based on observation rather than force the plan.

Implication: Planning time is not administrative time; it is instructional time. If the second teacher is expected to support learning, they must have time to understand the learning plan.

8. Child Progress Patterns: Supplementary Evidence

Caution: The assessment is observation-based and should be interpreted as supplementary evidence, not causal proof.

To strengthen the classroom findings, Tejasvita analysed Term 1 to Term 3 child progress data for the same two UKG classrooms. The analysis covered 46 children across comparable competencies in Tejasvita's preschool curriculum and assessment framework..

The assessment is observation-based. It should therefore be interpreted cautiously. The data does not prove that collaboration caused child progress. However, it helps test whether child progress patterns are consistent with the classroom evidence.

Measure	School-1-UKG : Term 1 → Term 3	School-2-UKG G: Term 1 → Term 3	Interpretation
Overall average score	43.8% → 80.8% (+37 points)	41.1% → 68.1% (+27 points)	Both classrooms improved from a similar starting point, but School-1 showed stronger overall growth.
English spoken language	32.3% → 75.0% (+42.7 points)	40.0% → 62.0% (+22.0 points)	A large difference appeared in a domain that depends on frequent adult interaction, conversation, prompting, correction, and confidence-building across the day. This is harder to achieve when the second teacher's role is narrow or partial-day.
English literacy	28.1% → 72.9% (+44.9 points)	33.9% → 52.4% (+18.6 points)	This was the strongest contrast. Literacy requires repeated, child-specific scaffolding across materials, sounds, words, books, and confidence-building. A broader, trained second-teacher role appears especially important here.

Cognitive/numeracy	40.1% → 80.3% (+40.2 points)	37.0% → 72.3% (+35.4 points)	Both classrooms made substantial progress. The smaller gap may reflect the fact that School-2's second teacher was used most clearly for targeted numeracy/math support, where a narrower role could still contribute meaningfully.
Social-emotional development	53.3% → 87.5% (+34.3 points)	48.6% → 83.9% (+35.3 points)	Growth was similar across the two classrooms, reminding us not to overstate a simple classroom ranking.
Lowest-starting children	26.2% → 67.9% (+41.7 points) (5 children)	23.2% → 53.8% (+30.6 points) (7 children)	Children who began at the lowest levels made stronger gains in School-1, which is especially relevant to the "every child succeeds" argument.
Children above 75% by Term 3	0 of 20 → 17 of 21 children	0 of 25 → 13 of 25 children	More children moved into a strong performance band in School-1 by Term 3.

Three patterns in the child-progress data are especially relevant to the second-teacher question.

First, the classroom with stronger two-teacher collaboration showed stronger overall progress. School-1-UKG and School-2-UKG began at broadly similar overall levels, but School-1 moved further by Term 3. This pattern is consistent with the qualitative findings: in School-1, the second teacher's time was better aligned with classroom needs, roles were clearer, both teachers had greater familiarity with the child-centric method, and planning routines were stronger.

Second, the domain pattern adds nuance. The gap between the two classrooms was smaller in cognitive/numeracy than in English spoken language and English literacy. This does not weaken the argument; it sharpens it. In School-2, Sandhya's role was narrower and more focused on children needing specific support, especially in math-related work. This kind of targeted role can still support progress in a familiar domain. But English

spoken language and literacy require broader adult participation across the day: conversation, prompting, correction, demonstration, sound-letter work, guided practice, read-aloud support, and confidence-building. These are harder to sustain when the second teacher is available for limited hours and is not yet trained holistically.

Third, the lowest-starting children moved further in the more coordinated classroom. This matters because the promise of individualised learning is not only higher average scores, but fewer children being left behind. In School-1, protected planning time, clearer role-sharing, stronger training, and more continuous teacher presence appear to have created better conditions for both teachers to notice children's needs, divide support, rotate attention, and follow up over time.

Taken together, the child-progress data does not prove that teacher collaboration caused stronger learning outcomes. However, it strengthens the main finding of this study: second teachers are most likely to support children's progress when their time, roles, training, and planning are intentionally designed. A narrow support role may help in a specific domain, but broader individualised learning requires the second teacher to become a trained, planned-with, and trusted co-educator.

At the same time, the pattern was not uniform across all domains. Social-emotional growth was similar across the two classrooms, and cognitive/numeracy growth was strong in both. This makes the analysis more credible: the data does not simply "prove" one classroom is better in every way. Instead, it suggests that broader two-teacher collaboration may be especially important in areas where frequent child-specific interaction and scaffolding are central.

Taken together, the child-progress data does not prove that teacher collaboration caused stronger learning outcomes. However, it does strengthen the main finding of this study: second teachers are most likely to support children's progress when their time, roles, training, and planning are intentionally designed.

At the same time, the pattern was not uniform across all domains. Social-emotional growth was similar across the two classrooms, and cognitive/numeracy growth was strong in both. This makes the analysis more credible: the data does not simply "prove" one classroom is better in every way. Instead, it suggests that stronger two-teacher collaboration may be especially important in areas where frequent child-specific interaction and scaffolding are central.

Overall, the child progress data strengthens the qualitative findings. It suggests that when second-teacher time, role clarity, training, and planning are stronger, more children are likely to receive the kind of repeated, responsive support that individualised learning requires.

The pattern supports the qualitative findings but does not prove causality.

9. What Strong Two-Teacher Classrooms Look Like: School-1-UKG

School-1-UKG shows what becomes possible when two teachers operate as a coordinated team. It was not strong merely because two adults were present; it was strong because both teachers shared ownership, planned together, rotated responsibilities, observed children, and trusted each other. Most importantly, the second teacher was not confined to one group or one domain. She was able to participate across classroom processes—free play, huddle activities, circle time, materials, observation, scaffolding, and literacy-related support.



Sanjana described the classroom as a shared garden:

“UKG is ours, whoever is there in our garden, that flower should bloom nicely.”

This metaphor shows that the teachers did not divide children into “my children” and “your children.” Even when they divided tasks, both remained responsible for the whole group.

During free play, they used a disciplined rotation system. One teacher sat with four children for about thirty minutes, providing intensive scaffolding, while the other maintained a wider view of the classroom. Then they switched. Rachana explained:

“In a week each of us will work with all the children.”



For huddle activities, they worked with different levels and rotated over time so both teachers understood the needs of all children. They also alternated lead responsibilities: one might conduct circle time while the other prepared materials; if one teacher was unwell, the other could take over. Rachana summed up this fluidity:

This breadth matters. Because both teachers rotated across children, levels and processes, neither teacher became the only person who understood a particular group. This also allowed the classroom to move beyond parallel work toward integrated collaboration: one teacher could provide deeper support while the other maintained a wider “bird’s-eye view,” prepared the next transition, or picked up children who needed support elsewhere in the room.

“If Sanjana ma’am is doing some other work, I am ready to do another work.”

Strong collaboration also included real-time communication and pedagogical initiative. The teachers spoke “in the moment” when children struggled unexpectedly or finished early. Rachana suggested using the back of huddle activity sheets for drawing and writing after children completed tasks; Sanjana adopted the idea, saying, “That is one good idea, I take from her.”

This is important for the literacy finding. Rachana was not only helping with a narrow set of children or materials; she was contributing ideas that extended children’s language, drawing, explanation, and written expression. In a child-centric classroom, this kind of pedagogical initiative is what turns a second adult into a true second teacher.

This case shows that the strongest second-teacher model is not based on hierarchy. It is based on shared responsibility, role flexibility, training, planning, and mutual trust. When these are present, the second teacher becomes a true co-educator.

“When she [Rachana] is present, it is like right and hand left hand. Two hands means we can hold everything nicely. One hand means I can’t hold twenty things in one hand.”

10. Implications

For Schools	For Program Designers	For Funders
Affordable private schools face real resource constraints, but one teacher alone is structurally insufficient for high-quality child-centric learning. Schools should align second-teacher presence with free play, huddle activities, process art, and other high-intensity blocks; avoid using the second teacher as a floating substitute; define who leads, observes, scaffolds, and manages the broader classroom; train both adults; protect common planning time; and maintain shared responsibility for all children. If a second teacher is new or minimally trained, a targeted role may be a useful starting point, but schools should not allow that to become the final model. The goal should be gradual movement toward broader shared responsibility.	Tejasvita and similar organisations need clear second-teacher frameworks. These should specify the second teacher's role during free play, circle time, huddle activities, stations, read-alouds, guided reading, transitions, and planning. Training should include child development, scaffolding, observation, material use, emotional support, behaviour guidance, differentiation, spoken language support, early literacy scaffolding, and classroom flow. Program designers should also build a progression pathway for second teachers: targeted support → small-group instruction → observation and scaffolding across domains → co-teaching. Mentoring tools should assess not only individual teacher skill, but also the quality of collaboration between two teachers.	For funders, the message is direct: quality is not only about curriculum, materials, or teacher training. It is also about staffing design. Funding second-teacher salaries during core learning hours is important, but salary alone is not enough. The role becomes powerful only when funding also supports training, paid planning time, mentoring, and gradual role development from targeted assistance to true co-education. It is an investment in whether child-centric education can actually reach every child.

NIPUN Bharat's goal is foundational learning for every child. For that vision to become real in low-income classrooms, staffing models must match pedagogical ambition.

Staffing models must match pedagogical ambition.

11. Conclusion

The evidence from this study suggests that in a child-centric, individualised learning environment, a second teacher is not an optional addition. It is a structural requirement.

As Chetana concluded:

“For this method one teacher really is not possible. So two or three teachers really it is need ma’am.”

However, the mere presence of a second adult is not enough. The role works when time is aligned with core learning blocks, roles are clear and flexible, training builds child-centric pedagogy, and planning time is protected.

The child progress data adds useful support to this argument, with an important nuance. The classroom with stronger two-teacher collaboration showed stronger overall progress, stronger gains in English spoken language and English literacy, and stronger movement among children who began the year at lower levels. Cognitive/numeracy growth was strong in both classrooms, which may reflect the fact that School-2’s second teacher was used more clearly for targeted math-related support. But the much wider gap in spoken language and literacy suggests that broader, better-trained, better-planned second-teacher collaboration may be especially important in domains that require continuous conversation, prompting, correction, demonstration, and child-specific scaffolding. Because the assessment is observation-based, these data should not be treated as causal proof. But they are consistent with the classroom findings.

Sanjana’s words capture the vision:

“UKG is ours, whoever is there in our garden, that flower should bloom nicely.”

To help every child bloom, one teacher cannot hold the whole garden alone. A strong child-centric classroom needs two hands.

12. References

- [1] National Council of Educational Research and Training. (2022). National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage. NCERT, Government of India.
- [2] Ministry of Education, Government of India. (2021). NIPUN Bharat: National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy. Department of School Education and Literacy.
- [3] Education Endowment Foundation. (2025). Deployment of Teaching Assistants: Guidance Report. EEF.
- [4] Blatchford, P., Russell, A., & Webster, R. (2009). Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in Schools: The Impact of Support Staff in Schools. Department for Children, Schools and Families, UK.
- [5] Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). Effective Teacher Professional Development. Learning Policy Institute.
- [6] Ministry of Education, Government of India. (2020). National Education Policy 2020.
- [7] ASER Centre. (2022). Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2022. Pratham.
- [8] FSG. (2017). The Preschool Promise: Improving Early Childhood Education in India's Affordable Private Schools.
- [9] National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2020). Developmentally Appropriate Practice Position Statement.
- [10] Tejasvita Trust. (2024). A Child-Centric Approach to English Literacy in Low-Income Preschoolers.